

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-12

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TAGS: PFOR, IN, US

SUBJECT: PRESS ALLEGATIONS

REF: NEW DELHI 14463

1. STORY BY SEYMOUR HERSH IN NEW YORK TIMES DEC. 9 ON WHITE HOUSE "PLUMBERS" WAS BASIS OF STORIES REPORTED REFTEL. TEXT OF RELEVANT PARAGRAPHS FOLLOWS:
QTE ON AUG. 13, 1971, THERE WAS ANOTHER MAJOR LEAK, WHICH WAS BELIEVED BY WHITE HOUSE OFFICIALS TO HAVE JEOPARDIZED A HIGH-LEVEL CIA INFORMANT INSIDE THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT. A DISPATCH BY TAD SZULC OF THE TIMES DESCRIBED HOW THE SOVIET UNION HAD SUCCEEDED IN DISSUADING INDIA FROM FORMALLY RECOGNIZING EAST PAKISTAN AS AN INDEPENDENT NATION BY SIGNING A HURRIEDLY ARRANGED FRIENDSHIP TREATY WITH INDIA. THE ARTICLE CITED INTELLIGENCE REPORTS, PRODUCED BY THE CIA, THAT HAD BEEN HANDED TO PRESIDENT NIXON A FEW DAYS EARLIER.

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THE LEAK WAS CRYPTICALLY MENTIONED IN AN AFFIDAVIT FILED

LAST MAY BY MR. KROGH IN CONNECTION WITH THE FIRST DISCLOSURE OF THE ELLSBERG BURGLARY AND THE PLUMBERS' OPERATIONS. MR. KROGH SAID THEN THAT THE CIA HAD INFORMED HIS UNIT "THAT A NEWS STORY HAD PUT IN JEOPARDY THE LIFE OF AN INTELLIGENCE AGENT, THUS EMPHASIZING THE NEED FOR

INCREASED INVESTIGATIVE EFFORT ON THE PART OF THE AFFIANT'S SPECIAL UNIT."

THE PLUMBERS, SOURCES SAID, HAD NO SPECIFIC INFORMATION LINKING THE LEAK TO DR. ELLSBERG OR TO ANY MATERIAL IN THE PENTAGON PAPERS.

ONE CONGRESSMAN WITH CLOSE CIA CONTACTS SAID HE HAD INQUIRED INTO THE AUG. 13 LEAK AND CONCLUDED THAT IT WAS NOT IN ITSELF VITAL TO NATIONAL SECURITY. "IT WAS SORT OF A LEFT-HANDED PROBLEM," THE OFFICIAL SAID. THE PLUMBERS' CONCERN OVER THE JEOPARDY OF THE INFORMER" HE ADDED, "WASN'T REALLY ON TARGET."

THE SOURCE, A DEMOCRAT, REFUSED TO AMPLIFY HIS COMMENT EXCEPT TO SAY, "THE ISSUE INVOLVED HERE ISN'T NATIONAL SECURITY; IT'S NIXON SECURITY."

2. HERSH ARTICLE ALSO STATES THAT "PLUMBERS" WERE INVOLVED IN AN INVESTIGATION FOLLOWING LEAK BY JACK ANDERSON OF WHITE HOUSE PAPERS PERTAINING TO THE DECEMBER 1971 INDO-PAK WAR. KISSINGER

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